



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Botanical Bulletin.

Vol. 1.

MARCH, 1876.

No. 5.

"CHIA."—During the past summer my attention was called, whilst in Southern California, to a mealy preparation in popular use among the Indians, Mexicans and prospectors. On inquiry I found it was called "*Chia*." Further examination proved that it was furnished by the seeds of *Salvia columbariæ*, Benth. The seeds are collected, roasted, and ground, in the native way, between two stones. This puts it in the condition in which I first saw it. It is used as a food by mixing it with water and enough sugar to suit the taste. It soon develops into a copious mucilaginous mass, several times the original bulk. The taste is somewhat suggestive of linseed meal. One soon acquires a fondness for it and eats it rather in the way of a luxury than with any reference to the fact that it is exceedingly nutritious besides. It is in great demand among the knowing ones who have a desert to cross, or who expect to encounter a scarcity of water, and what there is, of bad quality. By preparing it so thin that it can be used as a drink, it seems to assuage thirst, to improve the taste of the water and, in addition, to lessen the quantity of water taken, which in hot countries is often so excessive as to produce serious illness. As a remedy it is invaluable from its demulcent properties, in cases of gastro-intestinal disorders. It also holds a place among domestic remedies, for the same purpose that flaxseed occasionally does with us, i. e., a grain of the seed is placed in the eye (where it gives no pain) to form a mucilage by means of which a foreign body may be removed from the organ. I have found it of great service as a poultice. As a matter of archæological interest it may be noted that quantities of this seed were found buried in graves several hundred years old. This proves that the use of the seed reaches back into the remote past. Indeed I find several allusions to the name *Chia* in the second volume of Bancroft's great work on the *Native Races of the Pacific States*, pp. 232, 280, 347, 360. *Chianpinoli* appears to have been made by the so-called Aztec races from corn which was roasted and ground as the *Chia* was. From this, however, I conclude that the term *Chia* was then a generic name applied to meal derived from several sources. At present the name is almost restricted to the product of *Salvia columbariæ*. *Chia* was among the Nahua races of Ancient Mexico as regularly cultivated as corn, and often used in connection with it. I would state that my attention was first called to it by Mr. Kennedy, of Fort Tejon, California, a gentleman whose long and varied experience in that region makes him good authority upon all its products.—DR. J. T. ROTHROCK, *Wilkesbarre, Pa.*

THE new Aphrodisiac, Anti-rheumatic, etc., over which a few doctors are going into ecstasy, and by which certain drug venders hope to realize a small fortune, turns out to be an old, well known plant. Of course, for business reasons, it is best that the name and affinities of the herb should remain as obscure as possible. However, it is none the less *Bigelovia veneta*, Gray (Proc. Amer. Acad. Vol. VIII, p. 638). As older names we may quote also *Baccharis veneta*, H. B. K., *Aplopappus* (*Aplodiscus*) *discoideus*, DC. (Prodr. 5, p. 350.). Whatever virtues it may have are

likely to be shared by some near relatives, especially by such as *Bigelovia Menziesii*, Gray. The suspicion rises that ere long it will be consigned to limbo with *Condu-rango et id genus omne*.—DR. J. T. ROTHROCK.

A VALUABLE WORK.—I do not wish to be understood as acting in the interest of the booksellers, but for the benefit of botanists who may otherwise fail to obtain a valuable work at a very low rate, I will say that Sidney S. Rider, Bookseller, Providence, Rhode Island, has for sale at nine dollars per copy :—*A General System of Botany, Descriptive and Analytical*, by Le Maout and Decaisne, translated by Mrs. Hooker. The orders are arranged by J. D. Hooker. The copies are new and perfect, and formerly sold for twenty-five dollars. But few remain on hand.—DR. J. T. ROTHROCK.

NOTES UPON SOME GRAMINEÆ.—This group of plants seems well represented in Jefferson County, Indiana, as the following account of a portion of a season's collection will show. We have no doubt that the researches of a whole season by one thoroughly enlisted in this department of Botany would add many species to our list, especially the smaller species and those less general in distribution. The county presents such a diversity of soil and surface as to warrant us in the expectation of equally diverse plant life, and when to this we add its border line of climate and its extremes of heat and cold, we will find another reason for the presence or looked for presence of species naturally of more northern or southern habitat. Along our creeks, in considerable abundance, flourishes *Leeria oryzoides*, Swz., while every damp, open timber land is the home of the long wiry culms of *L. Virginica*, Willd. *Phleum pratense*, L., is our best hay making grass and economically of much importance, but it seems to be rather easily run out by the Red and White Clovers, or the more strongly rooting *Agrostis vulgaris*, With. For a short time its quality and purity remain excellent, but in the long run both it and the Clovers fall under the steady encroachments of the Red-top. *Vilfa vaginæflora*, Torr., grows plentifully in the clayey soil of the upper portion of the Ohio River bluffs. Its dry and scarious appearance after a season of remarkable moisture, would lead us to think that here it can be of little value as a food stuff for our cattle, but being a tenant of very poor soil, where nothing else seems to take hold, it asserts its usefulness. We suppose that we have found *V. Virginica*, Beauv., in many of the open commons. *Agrostis perennans*, Tuck., appears in fruit late in the fall along the water courses of the richer woodlands. *A. vulgaris*, With., is our most common meadow grass, seeming to find in the soil here those conditions that afford the readiest support. It may be said to be the essential grass of our meadows, and the dependence of the farmer. *A. alba*, L., is found sparingly along the grassy borders of small streams. *Cinna arundinacea*, L., grows quite sparingly in our open woods and occasionally straggles into the damper portions of a few meadows. Of the genus *Muhlenbergia* we have found five species, viz., *M. sobolifera*, Trin., *M. Mexicana*, Trin., *M. sylvatica*, T. & G., *M. Wildenowii*, Trin., and *M. diffusa*, Schreber. The first, *M. sobolifera*, is common in the open hilly woods running back from the Ohio River, while *M. Mexicana* generally appears in all cultivated ground. *M. sylvatica* and *M. Wildenowii* are found in small patches in most hilly and slightly timbered woodlands, while *M. diffusa* attains its greatest luxuriance in our very door yards, often making a dense matting by the interweaving of its numerous branches. *Brachyelytrum aristatum*, Beauv., is almost confined to a few damp woods. In nearly every sandy field may be found an abundance of *Aristida gracilis*, Ell., with here and there an intermingling bunch of *A. dichotoma*, Michx. *A. ramosissima*, Engelm., is very limited in its distribution, but in a few old sandy commons it occurs quite abundantly. Another intruder in our door yards and not a stranger to the public roads is *Eleusine Indica*, Gært. *Tricuspis sesterioides*, Torr., is rare, having been found in but a few patches along the Ohio. We would again call attention to a grass already mentioned in the BULLETIN, viz., *Diarrhena Americana*, Beauv., which, while limited in its distribution, is a little re-